
BREAKNECK GORGE GOLD PUDDLING SITE



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Breakneck Gorge Gold
Puddling Site View

Location

CHARLIES ROAD ELEVATED PLAINS, HEPBURN SHIRE

Municipality

HEPBURN SHIRE

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1305

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO971

VHR Registration

March 27, 1997

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 13, 1999

What is significant?

The Breakneck Gorge Gold Puddling Site is located on the steep northern bank of Spring Creek, immediately below the base of a basalt escarpment. The site consists of the remnants of one puddling machine complete with stone retaining walls. The site is a good characteristic example of the puddling technology developed in Victoria from 1854 in response to the need to process enormous amounts of clayey soil which needed to be broken up to get at the gold. Horses were used to drag harrows around a circular ditch in which the soil and water were mixed.

How is it significant?

The Breakneck Gorge Gold Puddling Site is of historical, archaeological and scientific importance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Breakneck Gorge Gold Puddling Site is historically and scientifically important as a characteristic and well preserved example of a site associated with the earliest forms of gold mining which, from 1851, played a pivotal role in the development of Victoria. Puddling machine technology is particularly important in the history of Victorian gold mining as the only technology or method developed entirely on Victorian goldfields. The Breakneck Gorge Gold Puddling Site is particularly important because it was part of a deep lead mining operation. The gold seekers at this site were tunnelling under the basalt to get to the gold bearing sediments of an ancient river system. Remains of these small-scale deep lead mines are now very rare in Victoria.

The Breakneck Gorge Gold Puddling Site is archaeologically important for its potential to yield artefacts which will be able to provide significant information about the cultural history of gold mining and the gold seekers themselves.

Permit Exemptions

General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

Specific Exemptions:

EXEMPTIONS FROM PERMITS:

No permits are required for the following classes of works provided they are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Conservation Plan For Historic Mining Sites prepared by David Bannear in 1996.

Mineral Exploration
Fire suppression duties
Timber production
Weed and vermin control
Public safety
Rehabilitation

Construction dates 1854,
Heritage Act Categories Registered place, Registered archaeological place,
Hermes Number 5053
Property Number

Extent of Registration

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act, I give notice under Section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including the Heritage Register Number 1305 in the category described as a Heritage and Archaeological Place:

Breakneck Gorge Gold Puddling Site, Breakneck Gorge, Junction of Spring and Jim Crow Creeks, Hepburn Regional Park, Hepburn Shire Council.

EXTENT:

1. All of the crown land including one puddler and associated stone walls within a 100 metre radius of the point with Australian Map Grid co-ordinates E452 N681 on 1:100,000 map sheet number 7723 Castlemaine.

Dated 6 March 1997

RAY TONKIN
Executive Director
[Victoria Government Gazette No. G12 27 March 1997 p.716]

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>